



ENGINEERING, INC.

Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors

March 22, 2007

Honorable Elsie Arntzen, Chairwoman
and Fellow Committee Members
Local Government Committee
Montana State Legislature
P. O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Reference: SB 527 – Condominium Revisions

Dear Chairwoman Arntzen and Committee Members:


Being the President of Engineering, Inc., a regional leader in civil consulting engineering services for land development, I felt compelled to convey my thoughts on SB 527 and urge you to not pass this bill. Although the changes appear on the surface to be benign, they in fact serve only to remove, yet again, one of the sensible tools of development that many of our clients rely upon.

Although I fully understand the intended results of this bill, it is my professional opinion that changing the subdivision and land ownership process is not the appropriate avenue to take. Rather, we should address the issues of public notification and involvement through the land use process by instituting more comprehensive zoning ordinances with broader coverage.

Although most of the condominium-based development is done in or near metropolitan areas for residential purposes, we must remember that the majority of Montana is rural in nature and should be allowed to use all of the tools available to maintain their property holdings in a fair and equitable manner. In addition, the use of the condominium process must be maintained as an alternative for economical commercial development, as well as the creation of more affordable housing markets and projects.

I will be present at your hearing to express these thoughts further and answer any questions you might have. In the meantime, I continue to strongly urge you to not pass SB 527.

Sincerely,


Rick Leuthold PE
President

RL/dml

c: Honorable Kim Gillan, Sponsor
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